

reasons: the Germans had, as Turkish allies, influence at Constantinople and could probably prevent the Turks from controlling too much on the freedom of Transcaucasia. In any case the Germans were unwilling to surrender to the Turks the rich oil fields of this region. And, furthermore, secret German agents were at that time making far-reaching promises to Tiflis.

Thus the situation in Tiflis itself caused Dunsterville uneasiness concerning his welcome there. Moreover at that moment the approaches to Tim's bristled with encumbrances. First the road from Ramadan to the Caspian was barred, in its Gilan sector, by the insurgent bands of Kuchik Khan. Kuchik Khan, who organized an insurrection of the Jangali tribes in Gilan against the central government of Iran, was hostile to the British. The second difficulty was in the possible port of embarkation on the Caspian coast—Enzeli (Pahlavi), which had come under the control of a Communist soviet, run by the local Russian elements and demobilized soldiers. The third obstacle was in Baku, where the expedition would have to disembark to reach Tiflis. Chaos reigned there owing to the Bolshevik agitation, and eventually Baku found itself under the control of a soviet, dominated by the Russian Bolsheviks.

All these obstacles prevented Dunsterville from reaching Tiflis immediately. Instead he had to stay in Iran till the middle of August, 1918, waiting for more favorable developments in Transcaucasia. His trucks were patrolling the whole length of the road between Khanaqin and Qazvin, watching for a possible Turkish breakthrough via Kurdistan into Iran and the Caspian coast. Oriental imagination is vivid, and the rumor went

around that the "Dunsterforce" had four hundred instead of forty trucks. These exaggerated reports must have reached the Turkish Headquarters and formed one of the reasons why the Turks did not launch a bold offensive toward the east at that time. The "Hush-Hush Army," as the "Dunsterforce" was called, thus played a most important role in containing the Turkish-German advance toward Central Asia.

While Dunsterville was waiting in Iran, the major disturbance in Transcaucasia was concentrated in the port of Baku. This oil city of Azerbaijan, subjected to a Bolshevik coup on March 22, 1918, had submitted to a soviet headed by Lenin's Armenian friend, Stepan